Marina Martinique Homeowners Association

Environmental Management

Annual Report 2025

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COASTAL, MARINE & AQUATIC ENVIRONMENT

Lollipop rehabilitation – 2025

Purpose and Compliance

During 2025, MMHOA implemented a legally compliant rehabilitation programme on the Lollipop site to address long-standing environmental, health, and aesthetic risks associated with large seabird colonies, particularly Cape Cormorants.

The primary objective was to prevent the resettlement of Cape Cormorants by transforming the site from a flat, open resting area into a vegetated, undulating landscape unsuitable for large colonies, while fully complying with national and provincial environmental legislation.

All activities were conducted under close engagement with DEDEAT (Eastern Cape Compliance Inspectorate) and DFFE: Ocean & Coast. Rehabilitation work only commenced in April 2025, after the end of the Kelp Gull breeding season, following confirmation from authorities. A temporary cease-and-desist order earlier in the year was complied with in full, demonstrating MMHOA's commitment to regulatory adherence and risk management.

Specialist involvement

Professional environmental and landscaping expertise was secured through Paradokx Wave, supported by MMHOA staff and Environmental Committee volunteers. Soil salinity assessments confirmed the need for saline-tolerant vegetation and informed the final design. The site was fenced, re-contoured, and planted with a diverse mix of indigenous trees, shrubs, groundcovers, and wetland species. Freshwater tap adaptors were installed to support establishment and reduce salinity impacts.

Key outcomes achieved in 2025

- Successful conversion of the Lollipop from flat terrain to a structurally complex, vegetated landscape.
- No resettlement of Cape Cormorants during the 2025 season, meeting the core project objective.
- Noticeable reduction in cormorant landings due to landscape undulation, vegetation structure, fencing, and targeted afternoon watering.
- Positive visual and environmental improvements noted by residents and visitors.

Kelp Gulls remained present and caused damage to some ground-cover vegetation during their pre-nesting period. This risk was anticipated and is being managed through adaptive landscaping, replanting, and the planned installation of water-activated deterrent sensors once legally permissible.

In November 2025, MMHOA received the 2025/2026 Seabird Management Permit from DFFE, authorising controlled disturbance and management actions under strict conditions. This permit provides a clear legal framework for ongoing monitoring, maintenance, and future seabird management.

Overall Assessment

The 2025 Lollipop Rehabilitation project successfully met its strategic environmental objectives, reduced operational and regulatory risk, and positioned MMHOA for compliant long-term seabird management.

Key Forward Focus

Continued monitoring and adaptive maintenance will be required, but the project represents a positive, defensible, and sustainable intervention aligned with both environmental legislation and the interests of the Association.

Canal Water Management – 2025

During 2025, the MMHOA implemented comprehensive and adaptive canal water management measures to maintain water quality, canal levels, and ecological health under variable and generally reduced rainfall conditions. Monitoring data and observations confirm that the canal system remained stable, compliant, and ecologically functional throughout the year.

Water Quality

Quarterly bacteriological sampling consistently showed excellent water quality, well within regulatory limits.

- *E. coli* levels remained significantly below the maximum allowable 250 cfu/100 ml.
- Faecal streptococcus levels were consistently far below the 100 cfu/100 ml threshold.
- Monthly salinity (±36 ppt) remained within optimal ranges as a closed estuarine system.
- Dissolved oxygen levels (typically 8.5–9.9 mg/L) remained within optimal ranges for fish and invertebrate health, indicating effective circulation and oxygenation.

Canal Water Levels & Hydrological Control

Daily monitoring and responsive inlet/outlet management ensured system stability despite periods of low rainfall, high winds, and temporary pump shutdowns.

- The ideal operating level was revised from 100 mm to 120 mm above the weir, improving outflow pressure, circulation, and algae control.
- Average canal levels were successfully maintained above the revised ideal for most of the year, even during dry periods.

This adaptive management approach significantly improved system resilience.

Rainfall Context

Rainfall from January to October 2025 was approximately 140 mm lower than the same period in 2024, reinforcing the importance of controlled seawater intake and ongoing water-saving measures within the estate. Despite this deficit, canal performance remained stable.

Algae, Sedimentation & Maintenance

Seasonal algae growth followed expected patterns but was notably reduced compared to 2024. Contributing factors include:

- Lower nutrient input and reduced freshwater runoff
- Avoidance of Cape cormorant settlement
- Earlier and more effective algae removal interventions

Enhanced manual removal methods, including net-dragging and patrol-boat scooping, proved effective, albeit labour-intensive. Visual comparisons confirm improved canal aesthetics and functionality relative to the previous year.

Biodiversity & Ecological Health

The canals continued to support a high diversity of marine life, including fish, ascidians, sea hares, pipefish, and eelgrass (*Zostera capensis*). Independent observations by Nelson Mandela University confirmed good habitat quality and ecological value. Isolated fish mortalities were linked to human interference rather than water quality issues.

Governance, Compliance & Communication

Regular resident communications, website updates, and environmental notices supported transparency and compliance. All monitoring data required for environmental oversight and future reporting remains current and well documented.

Overall Assessment

Despite reduced rainfall and seasonal pressures, canal water management in 2025 was effective and proactive. Water quality remained excellent, canal levels were well controlled, algae impacts were reduced, and biodiversity remained strong. The system demonstrated improved performance compared to 2024, with no material environmental or health risks identified.

Key Forward Focus

- Maintain current monitoring and adaptive inlet management
- Continue quarterly water-quality testing
- Progress sediment and nutrient studies with NMU
- Reinforce resident awareness on water conservation and wildlife protection

TERRESTRIAL ENVIRONMENT

Animal Management

Egyptian Geese

Concerns regarding noise and nuisance behaviour were noted. As an indigenous, legally protected species, geese must be managed within NEMBA regulations.
Drier conditions in the regions, resulted in low water levels in wetlands, pans and dams, causing more breeding pairs to settle in the estate.

Residents are again reminded not to feed geese, to discourage roosting on private structures, and to implement disturbance measures independently where required.

Bushbuck and Antelope Management

The wildlife relocation season closed on 30 October 2025. A DEDEAT transport permit (issued 14 November 2025) authorises relocation of 20 bushbuck from Arthur Fennel Park to Lombardini Game Farm, being the closest suitable area under emergency conditions.

Relocation will focus primarily on male animals to correct herd structure and reduce conflict. Lombardini intends to maintain a family herd for eco-tourism, with surplus males dispersed across their 600-ha property.

Rabbit Population Control

The Rabbit Population Control Programme is under review. A strengthened rule prohibiting wildlife feeding will be tabled for adoption at the AGM on 18 December 2025.

Feeding remains a major factor in rabbit concentration within the marina, undermining removal efforts.

A total of 27 rabbits were removed to a Gamtoos Farm and schoolyard area, while 13 cases of predation was reported. Natural predators observed feeding on rabbits include seagulls, heron, cape mongoose and domestic cats.

Vegetation Management 2025

Key Achievements

- Arthur Fennel Park. Maintained as the ecological core of the estate, with indigenous vegetation in good condition and positive feedback received from DEDEAT during an April 2025 site visit. Wildlife habitat integrity and separation from residential areas were confirmed as effective.
- Revegetation & Rehabilitation. Completion of the Lollipop site revegetation by May 2025 transformed a flat, degraded area into an undulated, vegetated landscape. This significantly reduced cormorant use of the site while improving erosion control.
- Nursery. A functional on-site nursery was successfully established, achieving a 65–75% propagation success rate. The nursery supplies indigenous plants for

landscaping, screening and rehabilitation projects, reducing costs and improving long-term sustainability.

- Landscaping & Beautification. Targeted planting improved estate entrances, pavements and privacy screening. Indigenous, water-wise species were prioritised, supporting both aesthetics and ecological resilience.
- Northern Access Road Screening. A phased vegetation screening project was initiated using Wild Banana (*Strelitzia nicolai*) and supporting indigenous shrubs. The project received written approval from Kouga Local Municipality and addresses dumping, visual scarring and environmental degradation.
- Tree Management & Governance. Long-standing practices were formalised into the Board-approved Sustainable Trees Policy (September 2025), providing clear, transparent procedures for tree maintenance, protection, removal and replacement. Compliance with protected tree and invasive species legislation was reinforced.

Compliance and Risk Management

All vegetation activities complied with MMHOA rules, municipal bylaws and NEMBA requirements.

Invasive alien species were actively removed or avoided in new plantings.

Tree removals were limited to infrastructure, safety or legal imperatives and accompanied by appropriate replacement planning.

Challenges

- Prolonged dry conditions affected plant establishment and required increased monitoring and watering.
- Persistent bird pressure (gulls and cormorants) necessitated adaptive management and innovative deterrent measures.

Overall Assessment

Vegetation management in 2025 delivered measurable environmental, aesthetic and governance improvements. The estate is transitioning steadily towards a more indigenous, resilient and policy-compliant landscape, with strong foundations in place for continued progress during 2026.

HEALTH AND SAFETY MAINTENANCE

Purpose and Compliance

During 2025, Marina Martinique Home Owners Association (MMHOA) maintained a proactive and structured approach to Health and Safety management, aligned with:

- The Occupational Health and Safety Act (85 Of 1993) and Applicable Regulations;
- Kouga Local Municipality Bylaws;
- Fire Safety Standards;
- Information Governance Legislation (POPIA And PAIA).

A Draft version of The Integrated Waste Management Policy was tabled for Board input during October 2025. This policy establishes the framework for waste management, spillage and dumping prevention, environmental risk mitigation, and non-compliance procedures, consistent with the South African legal duty of care and the “polluter pays” principle.

Regular inspections and risk management

Routine inspections were conducted across the estate, including HOA facilities, electrical rooms, storage areas, bridges, play parks and public-use infrastructure.

Unannounced hygiene inspections at Nina’s Restaurant were carried out throughout the year, with consistently high standards recorded and no compliance failures.

Comprehensive fire and risk surveys were performed by F & I Risk Management, ensuring compliance with fire safety regulations and insurance requirements with OHS policies and registers updated on a quarterly basis.

All Fire fighting equipment was inspected regarding effectiveness and usability while defective extinguishers were replaced. Two additional ‘Cooling Gel” extinguishers were acquired specifically towards Lithium battery emergencies.

Safety signage and communication

Significant updates to safety signage were made, including warnings for slippery surfaces, electrical hazards, and updated evacuation plans for key facilities.

Warning signs, disclaimers and instructional signage were reviewed, replaced or expanded across the estate, including bridges, play parks, gyms, substations and access roads.

Anti-slip measures were installed at high-risk areas, evacuation diagrams were developed for all key buildings, and emergency assembly point signage was completed.

Traffic and infrastructure safety was strengthened through upgraded drawbridge load-limit signage and the refurbishment of Northern Access Road directional signage, in line with national standards, to enhancing visibility and compliance.

Staff Safety and Training

Uniform and personal protective equipment (PPE) management was integrated into the OHS function, ensuring staff were properly equipped, including fire-retardant and acid-resistant overalls, safety footwear and branded identification apparel.

Training and awareness remained a core focus. Accredited First Aid and Fire Fighting training was completed by maintenance and security staff, supported by extensive web-based and in-house training covering labour law, customer service, management skills, substance abuse awareness and POPIA compliance.

First aid kits were audited and replenished, and fire safety readiness was reinforced through inspections and training.

Information governance and compliance obligations were met, with the POPIA Annual Report finalised and PAIA requests handled within statutory timeframes.

Overall Assessment

The Health and Safety programme in 2025 demonstrated proactive compliance with legislation, effective risk management, and a commitment to staff and public safety, fostering a culture of continuous improvement within the MMHOA.

Continuous inspections, improved signage, targeted staff training and proactive engagement with municipal authorities have collectively enhanced the safety of staff, residents, visitors and critical infrastructure across the estate.

Action required in 2026

Emergency evacuation procedures, fire safety (including Lithium-Ion battery risks), and workplace conduct must be prioritised, with innovative mobile-based training used to accommodate shift work and language diversity among staff.